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New York

President: Mr. Essy ..... (Côte d'Ivoire)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 43

Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields: report of the Secretary-General (A/49/558 and Add.1)

The President *(interpretation from French):* May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/49/558 and Add.1)?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed immediately.

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I call first on the representative of India, who is the Chairman of informal consultations on the funding of operational activities for development.

Mr. Sreenivasan (India): I am pleased to present an interim report on the consultations on funding of operational activities for development within the United Nations system, which was authorized by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/162 regarding the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. But first I should like to express my gratitude to the President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, Ambassador Samuel Insanally, and to the Assembly's President at the current session for my appointment as the Chairman of the consultations.

Two rounds of consultations were held — in June and September 1994. The report of the Secretary-General on the funding of operational activities (A/48/940) provided a sound basis for these consultations. The Member States agreed that there was a need for a substantial increase in resources for operational activities for development on a predictable, continuous and assured basis commensurate with the increasing needs of developing countries, as stated in resolution 47/199. There was also agreement that any new funding system should include mechanisms for all participating countries to demonstrate their responsibility and commitment to the programmes and funds.

There was widely shared concern about the decline in resources for the funds and programmes of the United Nations. It was noted that official development assistance stood at less than half the target level of 0.7 per cent set by the General Assembly in 1970. Reference was made to the analysis provided in the Secretary-General's report concerning the weaknesses of the current system, including the issue of burden-sharing and vulnerability due to over-reliance on a few major donors for the bulk

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of the resources. In this context, reference was also made to the increasing support from developing countries, including support through cost-sharing.

It was also noted that the demand for support in the area of operational activities — including support from countries in transition — had increased. Moreover, peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance placed increasing demands on resources provided by Member States. This situation required a particular focus on the efficiency and effectiveness of operational activities that could also be an incentive for countries to contribute. Particular attention should be given to maximizing the use of resources for programmes and achieving optimum results at the country level.

The issue of resource levels was considered to require a wider context than was provided by resolution 48/162 if the goal of predictable and assured resources was to be achieved. This did not mean reopening issues related to governance, but would be in addition to factors relevant to a new funding mechanism, as identified in resolution 48/162, which also require consideration of a range of factors affecting levels of resources. Some views were also expressed on the need to maximize resources for programmes and to minimize administrative costs. Reference was made to the rapid increase in supplementary funding or cost-sharing.

It was acknowledged in the consultations that there was a shared interest between recipient countries and donor countries in the context of development assistance. The donor countries were not only contributing to the general prosperity of the world, but also receiving returns from development cooperation through the provision of experts and other services.

It was agreed at the first round of consultations that concrete results should be achieved by June 1995, at the latest, within the framework of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, in accordance with resolution 48/162.

The process should aim at the identification of a funding system and mechanisms that would generate substantial increases in resources on a predictable, continued and assured basis. The fundamental characteristic of the operational activities contained in resolutions 44/211, 47/199 and 48/162 were reaffirmed.

Following the extension of the consultation process by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, a second round of consultations was held in October 1994. The critical nature of these consultations was stressed by Member States. It was pointed out that the financial crisis of the United Nations was not confined to the regular programme budget and the peace-keeping budget. In fact, the shortfalls in the funding of operational activities for development was even more serious. The importance of maintaining the fundamental principles of neutrality, multilateralism and the voluntary nature of contributions for the operational activities for development within the United Nations system were reiterated. The general view was that the funding of the operational activities had to be placed on a secure and predictable basis, and that this was an urgent question.

It was agreed that the Secretary-General should be requested to provide a supplementary report on resource targets for operational activities for the next three years, taking into account the needs of the developing countries; the advantages of multilateralism; the orientation, focus and specific priorities of the operational activities for development; the level of financing of programmes and funds over past years; the decisions made by the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes; the mandates from conferences and summits; and the projection of available funding and its implications for the United Nations system's capacity for implementing programmes. The Secretary-General would be requested to indicate the resources to be earmarked for administrative costs and programmes separately. The focus should be on core resources, but availability of non-core resources should also be taken into account.

There was broad interest in the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report concerning exchange-rate fluctuations and a system of three-year resource targets. But it was felt that the Secretary-General should be requested to include in his supplementary report a number of funding options for a changed and improved funding system that would generate a substantial increase in resources on a predictable, continued and assured basis. These options should take into account previous experience in the funding of United Nations activities linked to resource targets and the need for all participating countries to demonstrate their political will, responsibility and real commitment to the programmes and funds.

The consultations will resume as soon as we receive the supplementary report of the Secretary-General, which we hope will be available this month. In the meantime, I would like to thank the participants in the consultations,

developed and developing countries alike, the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development and the funds and programmes. We shall work together again to fulfil the mandate entrusted to us by the General Assembly.

Mr. Henze (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

Let me start by reaffirming that the European Union considers the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields to be an important and ongoing process. Significant progress has been made, and the resolutions of the General Assembly addressing this question, in particular resolution A/48/162, have led to encouraging results. Deliberations have become livelier and more focused in many forums. The European Union will firmly support efforts which take us further in this direction and structure our work more effectively.

The revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields must also be pursued with regard to its integration role. A number of conferences dealing with development-related problems have taken place recently or will take place in the next year. As examples, I cite the small islands Conference, the International Conference on Population and Development, the social Summit in Copenhagen and the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing. We believe that the United Nations is the only forum where we can integrate the results of these conferences into a comprehensive concept of sustainable development. In order to do so, the role of the United Nations in this field must be further enhanced. Further reforms to increase its relevance are needed. The discussions on the Agenda for Development provide an excellent opportunity for addressing the various aspects of this common endeavour.

In this context, we note a number of proposals for further summits and ministerial conferences. We would like to caution that such conferences should not proliferate and should not replace discussions in the General Assembly.

In particular, we will pursue our efforts to turn the Economic and Social Council again into a forum in which global and central issues of the world economy and of social questions are addressed in a focused and integrated manner. The high-level segment of the Council should be used, in our view, as an opportunity to address topical issues and important developments in the world economy and international economic cooperation, and to engage in an active dialogue with the heads of multilateral financial and trade institutions about the major themes of current interest in this area. A well prepared and focused agenda, submitted in timely fashion, as well as documentation which clearly indicates the issues for discussion, would stimulate more widespread ministerial participation. There is also considerable room for improvement as regards the cooperation and flow of information between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions and their respective counterparts in national Administrations, taking into account the comparative advantages of each institution. We should use the momentum gained in the interest of a better functioning of the system of international cooperation as a whole and of the consensus-building role of the United Nations.

We also note progress in the coordination segment of the Economic and Social Council, which deals with the coordination of policies and activities of the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system. The procedures adopted helped to streamline work. The agreed conclusions, which represent a new form of decisions taken by the Council, should be fully implemented and focused on the coordination aspect within the United Nations system.

We share the concern expressed in the report of the Secretary-General about the risk of perpetuating the consideration of issues taken up in this segment, but at the same time we would like to stress the importance of a follow-up discussion at the subsequent session of the Economic and Social Council on the implementation of the agreed conclusions so as to provide further guidance, if necessary.

Humanitarian activities were a major thrust of this year's Economic and Social Council work. We fully support the integrated approach taken by the United Nations system aiming at immediate relief measures and an effective continuum from humanitarian aid to rehabilitation and long-term development. Our main concern in this regard is, as has been said before, the effectiveness of coordination and delivery of assistance. We therefore encourage the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in its efforts to streamline existing mechanisms and improve vertical and horizontal coordination.

With regard to the debate in the General Assembly on humanitarian assistance issues, it is our hope that procedures may be further streamlined. We regret that the principle of clustering under agenda item 37 was not fully complied with and would like to see this amended in the future. Furthermore, consideration should be given

to taking up all draft resolutions addressing individual country situations in one omnibus text. The possibility of taking action on that text in the Second Committee should be explored.

We are encouraged by the results of the operational activities segment of the Economic and Social Council. The implementation of the basic and important resolution 47/199, which was the result of the 1992 triennial policy review, needs to be further strengthened, and the Council has a crucial role in ensuring that policies formulated by the Assembly, particularly during the triennial policy review of operational activities, are appropriately implemented. We look forward to pursuing these issues in more depth during next year's triennial policy review. With this year's decision the Economic and Social Council has provided clear guidance to facilitate this task as best as possible.

The measures taken under resolution 48/162 with regard to the governing bodies of the United Nations development funds and programmes have resulted in a major improvement in the work of those bodies. We greatly welcome the streamlining of procedures, the businesslike manner in which decisions are reached and the increased dialogue between delegations.

The question of documentation for the Economic and Social Council and the work of the General Assembly in the economic and social fields has, unfortunately, still not been satisfactorily resolved. A draft resolution on this question has now been submitted by the United States. The European Union supports the concept embodied in that draft resolution, and we believe that a frank, businesslike discussion of these ideas could lead to important results for the effectiveness of our work. For instance, we should look further into streamlining the work of the Second Committee by reducing the number and length of draft resolutions and by reviewing its agenda and working methods.

Our first experience with the restructuring and revitalization of the activities of the United Nations in the economic and social fields can guide us towards further progress. The credibility of this institution and the support given it depend on its improved performance, increased transparency and efficiency and better system-wide coordination. The European Union remains committed to contributing to all efforts to this end and looks forward to a constructive dialogue on these issues within the Agenda for Development and other relevant working groups.

Mr. Kudryavtsev (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Russian delegation made its basic assessment of the reform process initiated by General Assembly resolution 48/162 during the discussion of the report of the Economic and Social Council and the question of operational activities in the Second Committee. Without repeating those views, we should like to focus on what we consider to be the most important aspects of the post-restructuring work of the Economic and Social Council and the leading operational funds and programmes and the remaining unresolved problems involved in further reform.

Our delegation is satisfied, on the whole, with the early results of the Council's work at its first regular session under the new regime. The important results of the high-level segment, and of the coordination and operational segments, reaffirm the fact that those are the very segments that accomplish the major part of the Council's work. It is within the context of those segments — high-level, coordination and operational — that, to a significant degree, the mandate of the Economic and Social Council is implemented in the areas of political leadership and of coordination and control over the activities of the social and economic sectors.

The importance of the proceedings of this year's session of the Economic and Social Council is evident, both at the high-level meetings and in the discussions held with the participation of a wide range of international organizations, including the specialized agencies and, above all, the Bretton Woods Institutions, on key issues of their interaction in meeting world social and economic problems. We believe that that procedure will require further development and improvement, principally through the establishment of a direct and active exchange of views and a gradual approach to reaching agreed recommendations on the most significant issues of universal interest.

This year a good deal of work has been done on the reform of the principal bodies, funds and programmes of the United Nations — the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). This was by and large a positive experience. In operational terms it is quite natural that at this stage special attention should have been paid to improving the organization of work and the rationalization of the documentation prepared by the Secretariat, and the Russian delegation notes with satisfaction that those

issues were resolved by taking a fairly flexible and pragmatic approach.

In making a generally positive assessment of the work accomplished in the reform of UNDP and UNICEF, we should like at the same time to express agreement with the comment in the Secretary-General's report (A/49/558) that it is somewhat early to make a final assessment of the work on reform. The new bodies need to have an opportunity to work for a time under the new system so that next year, in 1995, a comprehensive review of their activities may be possible and their parameters corrected, if necessary.

On the question of the resources for operational activities, we share the concern expressed by many countries with regard to their insufficiency. I should like to express support for the efforts of the UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF leadership to mobilize additional resources from various sources. In our view, however, it is also important to enhance the effectiveness with which existing resources are used. As for the financing of operational activities, we, along with several other delegations, continue to believe that there is a need to retain the principle of voluntary contributions.

We feel that the success of the new organization of work of the "general segment" of the Economic and Social Council is unquestionably the reduction in the number of resolutions and in discussions which duplicate each other. We believe, however, that it is important that, while we should retain this reformist approach, Member States should still have ample opportunity to express their points of view on the agenda items of interest to them in this segment.

Serious reservations remain with regard to eliminating duplication of work by the Council and the General Assembly on their separate agenda items, although a great deal has been achieved in this respect. In particular, it is high time, at this period of goodwill, to consider removing from their agendas a number of items which are no longer relevant.

We see major possibilities, in particular, with regard to the accountability of the Council and its bodies. Adoption and implementation of the draft resolution on this subject submitted at the Council's summer session, and currently being considered in the Second Committee, would in our view be a major step in this direction. It would enable the Secretariat to organize the preparation of documentation, and provide for its timely publication, in accordance with United Nations standards. As we are all well aware, at one time, the constant breakdowns at this stage became a major impediment to the effective work of delegations. We believe that a greater sense of responsibility is also needed on the part of Member States which participate in the work of the Council and its bodies — above all, in terms of putting reasonable limits on the requests of delegations for the preparation of more and more reports and studies. The draft resolution contains proposals for concrete measures which could ensure definite progress along these lines.

I should like to express the hope that, through our joint efforts, we will be able to adopt by consensus this important draft resolution, which will genuinely promote an intensification of the reform of the Economic and Social Council.

Mr. Wlosowicz (Poland): Let me first thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/49/558) on "Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields".

The question of the restructuring of the United Nations to adapt it to the current and anticipated requirements, and greatly expanded expectations, of Member States after the end of the cold war has recently been the centre of attention of a number of Governments, non-governmental organizations, ad hoc committees and eminent experts. The Secretariat has also devoted some thought to this question, introducing a number of somewhat haphazard reforms, but also ordering special studies.

Poland duly appreciates the efforts of the United Nations system as a whole and those of other entities and organizations in responding to the need to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the work of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields.

The need to respond to such unsolved problems as social and economic underdevelopment, poverty and environmental degradation has brought about further calls for reform.

Poland fully shares the view that national Governments are ultimately responsible for the coordination of development assistance. The United Nations system should be prepared, on request, to assist Governments in their coordination efforts. To be able to respond to such requests the United Nations must first ensure a fully coordinated approach both within and between the programmes of its member organizations.

The implementation of a single United Nations country strategy can bring optimal utilization of collective knowledge, expertise and experience, an effective integration of resources and a reduction in the duplication of work. The design of the United Nations country strategy should result from close cooperation between a Resident Coordinator and the United Nations system organizations and an individual Government.

The Resident Coordinator should be responsible for the coordination and management of all United Nations activities in the country concerned, from emergency response through rehabilitation to development. Such increased cooperation between the United Nations development system organizations, contributing to better utilization of their comparative advantages, can be assured through a single United Nations country office. A unified presence in the field can contribute to the harmonization of the programming process, the standardization of programming systems and procedures, and the coordination of resource mobilization strategies for development programmes and emergency operations.

Another vital facet of restructuring might consist of that decentralization to which only lip service is now being paid, while elsewhere — for example, the Rio Conference institutional follow-up in the Secretariat — some decentralization is well under way. The formula for regional commissions calls for a thorough examination. They should avoid duplication with global organizations like the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and many specialized agencies, as well as the New York Secretariat structures. The streamlining of the scope of the activity of regional commissions according to one optional pattern would create possibilities for development data to be aggregated and compared. In particular, all of them should deal with social matters; for example, the Economic Commission for Europe should no longer be an exception in this regard, but should finally start to deal with social matters, especially with the social implications of the transition of centrally planned economies to open market economies. Once the priorities are determined and agreed upon, they should be incorporated — in the form of corresponding restructuring — throughout the Secretariat.

In the economic, social and related fields intergovernmental structures require careful scrutiny. While considerable progress has been achieved in the Economic and Social Council merging the economic and social aspects of development, and — as recommended by Poland — these aspects were put together in one Survey for the first time, the General Assembly continues to maintain two separate Committees. Therefore, we reiterate the proposal to merge the Second and Third Committees, without human rights, and create a new one — on human rights and humanitarian affairs — so as to provide Member States with a universal platform for dialogue on these matters.

While commendable changes have already been introduced in the Secretariat to upgrade units dealing with human rights, these account for only a part of the activities of the Third Committee within the structure of the General Assembly, although they deserve, in our view, to have a special organ. The Commission on Human Rights is only a functional body of the Economic and Social Council. In our view, it deserves a much higher rank, perhaps even that of main organ. The same concerns apply to humanitarian matters, which are not privileged to have any special intergovernmental organ.

We wish once again to restate our position — which we expressed in other interventions during the current session — on the need for interaction between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Poland has been advocating that the Economic and Social Council be invited to provide reports to the Security Council on economic and social developments that are of particular importance to world peace, security and stability.

The latest proposals for the restructuring of the United Nations development system should make it possible to react in a timely manner to the needs of countries undergoing structural reforms. In this context, our own experience in changing both our political and our economic systems in the direction of democracy and a free market could be thoroughly examined and serve as an example.

In my delegation's view, one of the major issues that should be taken into consideration during the present debate is the question of interaction between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions. It is of great importance to develop this cooperation both at the Headquarters and the national levels. The identification of areas of comparative advantage for the United Nations system and for the Bretton Woods institutions could result in a more efficient way of assisting individual countries.

I should also like to mention the importance of keeping in mind the mobilization of sufficient financial

resources when we deliberate on the reform and restructuring of the economic and social fields of the United Nations system and the need to better respond to countries' expectations. To better ensure predictability in the planning of future programmes, further studies and discussions on funding mechanisms for United Nations development activities are necessary.

My delegation fully supports the proposals to restructure the United Nations economic and social sector based on a rational approach so as to lead to enhanced coordination and effectiveness of work, better use of allocated resources, and more business-like working methods.

The forthcoming fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations will be an appropriate occasion to consider a possible restructuring of the network of intergovernmental bodies. In such an endeavour, the objective should be the adjustment of that network to the current and envisaged challenges confronting the world community and not to past priorities. In particular, a comprehensive — not piecemeal — approach to development should be ensured, the concepts of sustainable and human-centred development should be reflected in the institutional set-up, and any duplication of work by the various bodies should be avoided or eliminated.

Mr. Marrero (United States of America): The United States welcomes this opportunity to discuss the revitalization and restructuring of the Economic and Social Council. This is a vital effort, central to our mutual concern in making the United Nations a more effective instrument for pursuit of our common interests. We appreciate the Secretary-General's very helpful report in this regard and thank the Secretariat staff for their efforts.

The United States views the reform of the Economic and Social Council as a work in progress, with the goal of bringing about a fully effective Council now in sight but not yet fully achieved. Modest improvements in the working methods of the Council have been brought about with the current reform effort, but much more remains to be done. Similarly, the effectiveness of the governance over the United Nations operational activities for development has been improved, but wide latitude remains for further enhancement.

As we noted earlier, a number of the suggestions put forward by the Secretary-General in his report on an Agenda for Development are relevant to the ongoing project of increasing the Economic and Social Council's relevance and effectiveness. The Council is still far from performing the United Nations system-wide coordination functions set forth in Articles 63 and 64 of the Charter of the United Nations.

With the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations drawing near, it is fitting indeed that we consider how best to ensure the Organization's value and usefulness to the global agenda for the coming century. The economic and social activities of the United Nations offer, in many ways, the greatest opportunities for giving the United Nations a significant, if not central, role in international human relations.

A brief review of the current state of the Economic and Social Council under its revised procedures may be useful. In general, the United States is pleased with the progress made thus far, but remains concerned that the full potential of improved procedures has yet to be realized. Further streamlining is needed. The duration of the annual substantive meeting can and should be shortened, and recurring subjects with their ensuing resolutions should be taken up on a multi-year basis — biennialized, or, preferably, in some instances, triennialized wherever possible.

The Economic and Social Council's high-level segment offers a useful opportunity for ministerial-level officials to meet and exchange views. This opportunity is realized more on the margins of the Council meeting than in the meeting itself, however. We must strive to induce more of a dialogue among the high-level participants than a series of set speeches. While it may be difficult to eliminate prepared ministerial remarks altogether, we must seek to shorten them as much as possible and allow the maximum time for genuine dialogue. Focusing the subjects of high-level meetings as tightly as possible could also help encourage specific discussion.

The coordination segment at the Economic and Social Council's most recent substantive session worked particularly well in dealing with the narcotics issue, with real attention devoted to the problem and a resulting strengthened resolve to address it. After a half-day of formal speeches, the floor was opened for informal debate, producing a frank and useful discussion among Member States, United Nations agencies and international financial institutions on a number of issues relating to the United Nations system broadly and to agencies and multilateral development banks specifically. This was a very promising example to follow in continuing and further refining this segment. Greater discipline in

adhering to the agreed time-limit for introductory speeches would, perhaps, be the most obviously useful refinement.

In choosing the themes for the coordination segment, the United States strongly favours a greater effort to identify subjects of mutual interest to all members, rather than tending to balance pairs of themes of particular interest to specific groups of countries. This is an ideal that may be difficult to realize in practice, but one that we should constantly bear in mind as both a procedural and a substantive preference.

The United States would oppose establishing a multi-year calendar of themes for the coordination segment. Such an approach risks being unresponsive to evolving circumstances in the world. At the same time, we recognize the need for sufficient lead-time to enable the Secretariat to develop, and prepare properly for, the discussions of the Economic and Social Council. We would thus favour regularly implementing the proposal contained in Social and Economic decision 1994/33 — to decide on a principal theme or themes at a regular Council session for consideration at the subsequent regular session, allowing a year for preparation of a solid, substantive report on the chosen subject or subjects. The clause in decision 1994/33 that allows the subjects to be chosen as late as the organizational session immediately preceding the substantive session should no longer be applied; three months is simply too short a time to prepare properly for a serious, in-depth discussion.

The operational-activities segment seems to the United States to be the one most clearly on track in achieving its intended purpose of fostering a real give-and-take. We hope it will continue in this vein; it is working well. We have found it particularly useful for all interested participants in this segment to move from the great halls into smaller meeting rooms, where they can debate issues more effectively.

The Economic and Social Council's general segment also seems to be working well. Without a speakers' list, delegations appear encouraged to limit their interventions to well focused, truly relevant remarks. Real dialogue seems to be the result and the session is much more interesting to attend — certainly not the least of the considerations that should motivate us to carry on in this mode.

The decisions of the Economic and Social Council could be followed up more effectively if, in the first instance, there were fewer decisions. The UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board model of adopting decisions without preambular paragraphs can well serve as an appropriate model for our work in the Economic and Social Council. Subjects should be taken up biennially — or, preferably, triennially — to the maximum extent possible. Additionally, we should all vow to review the regularity by which we call for reports on the implementation of decisions. How much can realistically be done in one year to warrant a report on a decision's implementation? In most cases, probably not much — and a realistic multi-year reporting schedule would recognize this fact, with exceptions as necessary.

Moreover, streamlining reports to the bare minimum would be very helpful. Only the truly operational paragraphs of a specific decision should be cited in a report and given a succinct and substantive response. Extensive background information should be eliminated altogether. Brevity is the soul of wit, and concise reports limited to the actual, actionable requests from the decision mandating the report should be the heart of the Economic and Social Council's follow-up process. Once again, the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board model for reports would be useful for the Economic and Social Council to imitate.

The use of the Economic and Social Council as the policy-making body of the operational development programmes is still moving from concept to practice. We await the complete implementation of this scheme without undue further delay, and look forward to evaluating it once it has gone fully into operation. Meanwhile, we note that the new Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) have begun to show improvements in effectiveness in comparison with the governing bodies they replaced, and we anticipate that further refinements will come with experience in their operation.

The Secretary-General's recent report containing proposals for an Agenda for Development contained several suggestions for further reform of the Economic and Social Council. We will not repeat our views in detail here as they were presented earlier in the debate on that subject. We would simply note once again that two ideas are of particular interest in crafting further enhancements of the Economic and Social Council: first, further reforming the Economic and Social Council to serve as a unifying governing body for all United Nations operational programmes and activities and as a mechanism for reviewing development assistance and identifying impending humanitarian emergencies; and,

secondly, creating an expanded bureau of the Economic and Social Council to meet between Council sessions — a de facto executive committee.

Closely-related ideas that would bear importantly on supporting and facilitating improvements in the Economic and Social Council include using the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) to strengthen coherence and impact of United Nations agency work — a de facto "cabinet" to drive coordination, cooperation and collaboration — and creating a more integrated, efficient and effective structure for United Nations development activities with frequent meetings of all senior United Nations officials in the economic and social sectors, presided over by the Secretary-General and organized by the UNDP Administrator, as a mechanism for the better coordination of development activities.

We hope these suggestions will receive due attention in the proposed open-ended working group to consider the Secretary-General's recommendations in an Agenda for Development.

In conclusion, we note that the agenda for improving the Economic and Social Council remains open as the effort for improvement remains a work in progress. In particular, we share the sentiments expressed by some other delegations in the course of the forty-ninth session, and also noted by the Secretary-General at earlier sessions, that radical reduction of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council is needed, both by consolidation as well as outright elimination of numerous activities of marginal value or lower priority. This remains a task to be more fully defined and undertaken perhaps as part of the renewed commitment to the United Nations that should accompany the commemoration of its fiftieth anniversary.

Mr. Illueca (Panama) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: To speak for Panama is a special circumstance for me which might, in a sense, be secretly symbolic especially in reference to the item under consideration at this meeting.

I have long travelled the corridors leading to this rostrum. The United Nations is a powerful reality for me. My country and I have always been there when circumstances required unswerving loyalty to the ideals of the United Nations.

In the quest for a universalist answer to the problems of the international community my country has always shown a spirit of cooperation. In the Latin American and Caribbean Group, we know the course set for us by the liberators of our continent. It is with these credentials that I come to this rostrum again to say that the delegation of Panama is available to make its contribution to the trend of feelings and ideas which abound in the General Assembly.

For approximately five years it has been stated in the various forums of the United Nations that the end of the cold war has seen the disappearance of politicization. My delegation believes this to be relatively true. Any society strangled by emergencies must resort to taking decisions that become political in the sense that they must show preference for one solution at the expense of others; choice has always been the result of power. We have also heard a great deal about the bureaucratic density of the Secretariat and of the United Nations organs; we also hear the great variety of opinions of Member States; and both are blamed for the inability of the United Nations to act.

My own personal experience is that every time the United Nations gives too much room and too much exclusivity to the exercise of power, it ends by paralysing its own creative dynamism.

While it is true that the international climate has changed in scope, it is also true that trends, particularly in the economic, social and related fields, continue to lead to outbursts of frustration among those who are weak and small — I refer, of course, to Member States.

As can be seen in the texts of the annexes to General Assembly resolution 48/162, the United Nations has established objectives, goals and programmes of action in the economic and social fields and related areas. There are many important instruments adopted by consensus whose purpose is to promote international economic cooperation and, in particular, to foster economic growth and development in the developing countries.

My delegation believes that to find the path of restructuring that will revitalize the United Nations and enhance the functioning of the Economic and Social Council, we must follow the guideposts of creative freedom. To the extent that freedom can be exercised with potency in the international arena, "we the peoples of the United Nations" will succeed in working together to solve problems, gain a proper sense of history and guide events creatively.

It is nearly impossible to quantify the determination of Member States to bring about change and progress, but it is certain that this determination has its roots in the originality and abundance of positions stated at United Nations meetings.

The delegation of Panama stresses its respect and admiration for the diversity that enriches the dialogue between Governments and between peoples. I take this opportunity also to say that we are daily confirmed in our view that in the present circumstances of the United Nations the moral authenticity of these diverse views springs from frequent, often joint, recourse to conciliation machinery, to tolerance, to reform and to incalculable generosity.

The spirit of reform must be inspired by a deep-seated resolve to restore the United Nations, in keeping with faith in a common destiny of dignity for all peoples and with steady adherence to the principle of equality and the ideal of solidarity, which are essential if international relations are to be democratized. My delegation earnestly desires this debate to bolster that faith and that ideal.

The Secretary-General has reiterated his determination to engage in a fair assessment and a balanced evaluation of what is right and what is wrong, of problems, of material resources and of procedures. He has stated his belief that the United Nations must be founded on action, based on principles and bolstered by values.

The proper voice may or may not be that of the powerful and their interests, but it must be the voice of a people aspiring in the United Nations to speak of "we the peoples", setting aside selfishness and sharing a true communion of ideals. That aspiration to a true communion stems from every society's need to free itself from the solitude and isolation of its self-sufficiency and its needs. Indeed, such solitude is incompatible with the shifting vista of interdependence. This communion razes the obstacles that selfishness erects in the path of constructive communication. A Member State of the United Nations, whether large or small, can shed its selfishness by being ever ready to communicate with other States and to stride with them upon the broad field of creative freedom while remaining true to itself.

Among all the organizations working in the economic, social and related fields, the United Nations, owing to its founding principles and ideals, undoubtedly bears the greatest responsibility to light a beacon of hope. Each Member State must be sure that what the Organization does to combat poverty and hunger and to achieve development will go beyond the short-term. Most important — for it offers a real dividend — is to seek within the United Nations absolute brotherhood and equality, surmounting differences, inequality and even territorial, ethnic and religious conflict, all of which we are pledged to overcome for the sake of peace, progress and human happiness.

Mr. Butler (Australia): The restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields is a subject of indisputable importance. It is very interesting to my delegation that few refer to the fact that we have been about this business for some four years, having started down the track in 1991. I put it to the Assembly that we are at a turning-point, a point at which we must begin to make new departures for the twenty-first century.

The report of the Secretary-General before the Assembly in document A/49/558 gives a clear account of actions which have been taken and which are now under way in the process begun four years ago, actions designed to bring about both more effective and more efficient functioning of the Economic and Social Council and of the United Nations funds and programmes in the area of development.

On an earlier occasion, in the Economic and Social Council, I discussed what my delegation thought was meant by those concepts of effectiveness and efficiency. A ready definition that we thought useful to us all was that effectiveness is to do the right things, and efficiency is to do those things well. It seems to Australia that these are objectives on which we must keep our gaze firmly fixed: to do the right things, and to agree to do them well.

The changes that are outlined in the Secretary-General's report and that are under way now are important intrinsically, but I submit that they are also important for at least three far deeper reasons. One is the issue of balance within the United Nations. We should not fail to remember that the Charter of the United Nations is not simply about the maintenance of international peace and security; it is equally directed to "social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom". And to that end Article 1 (4) enjoins us to harmonize our actions — not our thoughts, not our aspiration, but our action. In Article 56 Members pledge themselves to quite specific measures of international economic and social cooperation. Unless we remember

that pledge, and our commitment to better standards of life in larger freedom, we will not have balance in the United Nations.

Secondly, there is the concept of human security. This is not opposite, or in contradiction to, the concept of the security of States; it is a concept that has been brought to the centre of our agenda by the circumstances we face today. It is for that deeper reason as well that what is at issue in today's debate is important: what is at issue is balance in this house and bringing to the fore, alongside the concept of the security of States, the concept of human security.

Thirdly, if we are to take this approach, we will then be addressing the significant need, which I believe we all acknowledge the United Nations to be facing, to reintegrate the Organization so as to be sure that we are doing all of the things that are in its Charter, not just some of them chosen selectively. Many have observed that this is in fact a major opportunity of the post-cold-war period: not just to send the Blue Helmets to places where they have not been before, but to reintegrate the United Nations and to make sure that we seize the opportunity presented by the end of 40 years of frozen politics to ensure that the concept of human security and the promise of the Charter in the economic and social fields are brought to the centre of our agenda.

In practical terms, what is at issue in such action is to ensure a definite improvement in the capacity of this Organization to take decisions — decisions defined as actions and agreements which cause something practical to happen outside this Hall — rather than merely to create materials that are of archival significance alone. There are many reasons for our wish to do this — the practical reasons of human security — but I should like to mention one in particular: our own public credibility.

There is a clear want of credibility for this Organization. That credibility would surely be greatly enhanced if those who sent us here were to see us taking actions and decisions which cause things to happen rather than creating materials of merely archival significance. For these reasons, the reforms which are being implemented, particularly in the Economic and Social Council, must be continued. The task is not over. They must be continued and they must continue to be implemented.

But as we do that I believe we are now bound to recognize the emergence of a new element and a new set of concerns. Of course, I am referring to the Agenda for Development. It can be expected that the General Assembly will shortly decide to establish a working group to consider the Agenda for Development in substance. We have the two documents before us. We have had a debate. The time for action is upon us.

I wish to make it clear that Australia strongly supports the establishment of that working group and the commitment and work that will flow from it. As this vital work unfolds, it will be very important that the work on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations economic, social and related activities — which in many respects is organizational and procedural in character — be brought into the most productive possible relationship to what will be decided in substance pursuant to the Agenda for Development. We must continue with this reform and revitalization process, recognizing that, to a great extent, it is necessarily organizational and methodological in character. We must, at the same time, now ensure that it complements, is able to be folded into and fits with what we will do in substance in the vital area of the Agenda for Development.

It is clear that, as we approach the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, perhaps one of the main products of that historic event will be the need for us to synthesize the outcomes of the six great global Conferences of the post-cold-war period and the Agenda for Development. By those Conferences, of course, I am referring to the 1990 World Summit for Children, the Rio Conference on Environment and Development, the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development and the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women.

These six great global events, appropriately taking place after the end of the cold war, have set an agenda for us. What could be more relevant than children, the environment, population, human rights, social development and women, plus the Agenda for Development? They are our source materials. We need to synthesize their outcomes so that we can construct a new agenda for the United Nations for the twenty-first century. As we do that, we will also need to provide the United Nations — and this is why this debate today is relevant — with the working methods and institutional arrangements capable of implementing that new, synthesized agenda system-wide. If we do that, we will then redirect ourselves towards decision-making in the way I mentioned earlier — decision-making and the achievement of concrete results — because we will have

a relevant agenda for the twenty-first century and the useful mechanisms of this institution on the basis of which we can implement and work on that agenda.

One such outcome in organizational terms could be that, in the future, the Economic and Social Council would meet regularly and/or that it might have the expanded Bureau or executive that some have mentioned. But one such outcome could be that the Economic and Social Council would meet more regularly than it has done in the past. I should like to say a word about that.

It is clear to many of us, I think, that here on this floor of United Nations Headquarters, one end of the corridor is travelling rather low in the water — indeed, some would say that it is shipping too much water — while at this end the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council are still travelling somewhat above the waterline. The United Nations vessel should not be listing, tipped down low in the water at the Security Council end of the corridor, but travelling on an even keel. To achieve this, we must give greatly increased attention to the economic and social concerns of Member States and, indeed, to the people each Member State serves. Only if we do this will we have reintegrated the United Nations, put it back together as a whole. Only if we do this will we enable this Organization to keep its promise to all people.

In concluding these remarks, I hope I may say briefly that, as President of the Economic and Social Council for 1994, I am very grateful to the Secretary-General for his having reflected in his report for this debate the changes we have made in 1994. I am very grateful to Member States for their cooperation in agreeing to and implementing those changes. Of course, I can only urge my successor in 1995 to continue down that path of change and reform.

Mr. Lamamra (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): The consideration of the Secretary-General's report in document A/49/558 on the implementation of recommendations contained in resolutions on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields gives me the opportunity, on behalf of the States members of the Group of 77 and China, to make a few comments and observations arising quite naturally from the particular importance which the developing countries attach to this question in all its aspects. I wish to note first the significant delay in the issuance of the report, since, in our opinion, it should have been submitted to the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council which, having had an adequate opportunity to consider it, would then have been in a position to make appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. Although this stage was ignored, and a great deal of time was available to draw up this report, it adopts an entirely descriptive approach which, for the most part, confines itself to narrating without any substantive analysis the activities carried out by the various organs and institutions involved in the implementation of the provisions of resolution 48/162 in particular. It would have been desirable, for example, to stress the respective roles of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in this context, particularly regarding the practice of the division of work between these two major bodies in the light of a year of experience.

While it is true that a single trial year cannot objectively form a basis for a conclusive assessment of the functioning of the governing bodies of funds and programmes, the report nevertheless did stress several positive aspects dealing with the improvement in methods of work of those bodies, particularly as regards the situation which prevailed before their restructuring. However, the report was not very bold in its references to the difficulties and flaws linked to the situation resulting from the restructuring. From the point of view of the developing countries, the situation presents, at the least, the following drawbacks.

The programming of several meetings of the Executive Boards of funds and programmes throughout the year made effective participation by the developing countries in the deliberations of these Boards extremely difficult, particularly given the limited size of their delegations to the United Nations and the financial problems resulting from the sending of representatives from their capitals. This state of affairs runs the risk of infringing on the universality and representativeness of these bodies in that it undercuts the balance and transparency that should characterize their decision-making process.

The de facto marginalization of the developing countries is fraught with the danger that the governing bodies of the funds and programmes might in time be transformed into committees of experts, with the result that policies and programmes would not necessarily meet the specific and concrete needs of these countries to which resolutions 47/199 and 48/162 refers.

The allocation of issues between the regular meetings and the annual meetings no longer seems clear

to the extent that the guiding line between the two types of session lacks clear definition of a plan for the allocation of subject-matters, with the consequence that the character of the annual session as an important decision-making body is diminished.

Given these considerations, the Group of 77 and China believe that the report to be submitted to the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in 1995 must make recommendations that respond to these concerns, duly taking into account paragraphs 37 and 38 of annex I of resolution 48/162, dealing with the machinery for the review and consideration of the effectiveness of the measures taken to improve the working methods of the Executive Boards, with a view to preserving in all circumstances the indispensable balance between universality, efficiency and transparency. The triennial consideration of operational activities during the fiftieth session of the General Assembly could also provide an appropriate framework for making the necessary adjustments to remedy the deficiencies that may be observed by that time.

The report under consideration shows that there has been no movement in the discussions on the financing of operational activities within the framework of the Working Group of the General Assembly created during the forty-eighth session to consider modalities and mechanisms to improve the financial situation of these activities. Despite the commendable efforts of the Chairman of the Group, Mr. Sreenivasan of India, it seems that this aspect of restructuring were the victim of a dangerous phenomenon — marginalization and disinterest — while operational activities are suffering, first and foremost, from a chronic erosion of resources. Moreover, the package that was negotiated within the framework of resolution 48/162 clearly implied that the developing countries' acceptance of the reduction in size and the changes in the membership of the Executive Boards of funds and programmes was linked to the commitment of the donor countries to an increase in financial resources earmarked for operational activities for development on a continuous, secure and predictable basis. As of now, prospects for a satisfactory solution to this question do not seem to be at hand, and it is feared that the lack of political will to honour this commitment — increasing the resources — is in fact linked to and fuelled by the lack of a consensus concerning the machinery and systems for financing.

In the last analysis, without the improvement sought in the financing of operational activities, the developing countries, the majority of which are beneficiary countries, will be doubly penalized: through underrepresentation and diminished participation in the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes and because of the shrinking volume of their cooperation programmes.

The President returned to the Chair.

The last paragraph of the report before us takes up the question of the modalities of reporting in the economic, social and related fields by recalling the language of paragraph 36 of annex I of resolution 48/162. In that context, the report refers to these measures that were submitted by the Secretariat to the Economic and Social Council at its 1994 substantive session. These measures, which were not considered in depth, clearly result from an interpretation which is quite remote both from the spirit and the letter of the basic text. Indeed, this question had been taken up by the General Assembly in terms of the role that the Secretariat should play in the restructuring process, under the heading "*Secretariat: the enhanced role and capability of the United Nations Secretariat*". More specifically, paragraph 36 invites the Secretariat further to examine ways and means to enhance the modalities of reporting and makes mention of the advantages of establishing a system of integrated reports. However, the measures recommended by the Secretariat clearly seem to opt for a solution of expediency, namely, the elimination of a certain number of reports in favour of oral reports, the limitation of the contents of the reports to a simple statement of the results of votes and the submission of draft decisions and resolutions, and so on.

This reductionist approach of the very idea of rationalization posits as an axiom a drastic and mechanical reduction of the documentation required in the economic, social and related fields, while the revitalization of other United Nations activities is being reflected by an opposite trend. In addition, it is clear that limits on documentation and the introduction of more oral reports would primarily affect the ability of small delegations to participate, since their size does not allow them to have more a physical presence and to develop sufficient continuity and an adequate filing system. Finally, it is clear that a fragmented and biased approach to this issue could not have telling results and that it is to the Committee on Conferences, whose mandate includes the formulation of recommendations on the issue of documentation as a whole, that these Secretariat suggestions should have first been sent.

The Group of 77, which is reformist by nature, cannot, however, associate itself with proposals that contain the seeds of the marginalization of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations at a time when major international conferences, as well as the report of the Secretary-General on an "Agenda for Development", are finally endowing this vital area with the importance it must have, both within the Organization and among the concerns of the international community.

We hope that the consideration of this agenda item a year from now will provide a greater source of satisfaction for the developing countries.

The President *(interpretation from French):* We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 43.

Agenda item 34 *(continued)*

The situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General (A/49/689)

Draft resolution (A/49/L.40)

The President *(interpretation from French):* Members will recall that the Assembly concluded its debate on this item at its 69th meeting, which was held on 28 November.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/49/L.40.

In this connection, I should like to refer to a mistake in one of the footnotes to the draft resolution. Footnote number 3 should read "A/49/689" and not "A/48/931".

The following countries have joined the sponsors of the draft resolution: Austria, Canada, Finland and Sweden.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/49/L.40?

Draft resolution A/49/L.40 was adopted (resolution 49/27).

The President *(interpretation from French):* We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 34.

Agenda item 16 *(continued)*

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections

(a) Election of twelve members of the World Food Council: note by the Secretary-General (A/49/260 and Add.1)

The President *(interpretation from French):* In accordance with resolution 3348 (XXIX) of 17 December 1974, the General Assembly elects the members of the World Food Council upon the nomination by the Economic and Social Council.

The Assembly has before it document A/49/260 and Add.1 containing the nominations by the Economic and Social Council to fill the vacancies in the World Food Council that will occur as a result of the expiration, on 31 December 1994, of the terms of office of Albania, Australia, the Central African Republic, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Nicaragua, the Russian Federation, Swaziland, Thailand and Uganda.

Those States are eligible for immediate re-election.

I should like to remind Members that after 1 January 1995 the following States will remain members of the World Food Council: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Ecuador, France, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Japan, Liberia, Malawi, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, the Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey and the United States of America.

Therefore those 22 States are not eligible in this election.

The following States have been nominated by the Economic and Social Council: (a) three African States for three seats — Angola, Kenya and Uganda; (b) two Asian States for two seats — Indonesia and Marshall Islands; (c) one Eastern European State for two seats — Russian Federation; (d) three Latin American and Caribbean States for three seats — Colombia, Dominican Republic and Honduras.

As a result, the number of candidates nominated from among the African States, the Asian States and the Latin American and Caribbean States is equal to the number of seats allocated to each of those regions.

As delegations know, rule 92 of the rules of procedure provides that all elections shall be held by secret ballot. However, in accordance with paragraph 16 of decision 34/401, the Assembly may dispense with balloting when the number of States nominated from among the regions is equal to the number of seats to be filled.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to declare those States elected members of the World Food Council for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1995?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* May I further take it that the Assembly also wishes to declare the candidate nominated from among the Eastern European States elected a member of the World Food Council for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1995?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I congratulate the States that have been elected members of the World Food Council.

Regarding the three remaining seats — one for the Eastern European States and two for the Western European and other States — for this session, the General Assembly will be in a position to act on them upon the nomination by the Economic and Social Council of Member States from those regions. I should also point out that there are two seats left vacant since the forty-eighth session — one for the Eastern European States and one for the Western European and other States — which also require candidates from those groups nominated by the Economic and Social Council.

I therefore propose that the Assembly keep this sub-item on the agenda of the forty-ninth session.

If I hear no objection I shall take it that the Assembly agrees to that procedure.

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 16.

Agenda item 17 *(continued)*

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(h) Appointment of the members of the Consultative Committee on the United Nations Development Fund for Women

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The terms of office of the present five members of the Consultative Committee appointed under General Assembly decisions 46/311 A, of 13 November 1991, 46/311 B, of 20 December 1991, and 46/311 C, of 22 May 1992, expire on 31 December 1994.

Following consultations, I have appointed Indonesia and Uganda members of the Consultative Committee for three-year terms beginning on 1 January 1995.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of these appointments?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: With regard to the three seats remaining to be filled, the consultations to identify the candidates for appointment as members of the Committee are still under way. I wish to reiterate to the regional Groups my hope that they will continue to cooperate with me in this connection.

I propose that the Assembly retain sub-item (h) of agenda item 17 on the agenda of the forty-ninth session.

As I hear no objection, I take it that the Assembly agrees to that procedure.

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (h) of agenda item 17.

(i) Appointment of members of the Committee on Conferences: note by the Secretary-General (A/49/109)

The President *(interpretation from French)*: As indicated in document A/49/109, since the terms of office of Honduras, Hungary, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jamaica, Mozambique, Senegal and Turkey expire

on 31 December 1994, the President of the General Assembly must appoint, during the current session, seven members to fill the resulting vacancies. The members appointed will serve for a term of three years beginning on 1 January 1995.

Following consultations with the Chairmen of the Group of African States, the Group of Eastern European States and the Group of Western European and Other States, I have appointed Belgium, Ghana, Latvia and Senegal members of the Committee on Conferences, effective 1 January 1995.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of these appointments?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from French*): With regard to the three seats remaining to be filled, one from among the Asian States and two from among the Latin America and the Caribbean States, I intend to hold further consultations with the Chairmen of the Groups concerned. I therefore propose that the Assembly retain sub-item (i) of agenda item 17 on the agenda of the forty-ninth session.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees to that procedure.

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (i) of agenda item 17.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.